

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants appreciate the thorough review of the present application as reflected by the Official Action. Each of the issues raised by the Official Action has now been addressed such that reconsideration of the application and allowance of the amended set of claims are respectfully requested.

The Official Action initially objects to the specification since the title is not descriptive. The title has now been amended to be more descriptive in describing the optical device and display apparatus to have “a plate-shaped light guide and an optical control surface thereon.” Applicants therefore submit that the objection to the title is overcome.

The Official Action objects to Claims 105, 115, 148 and 154 for various informalities. Of these, Claims 105, 115 and 148 have been cancelled. Claims 105 and 148 were found to define allowable subject matter and have therefore been rewritten in independent form as new Claims 166 and 167, respectively. In rewriting these claims into independent form, the phrase “of liquid crystal area” that was found objectionable by the Official Action in Claims 105 and 148 has been deleted. Thus, Applicants submit that new Claims 166 and 167 are in condition for immediate allowance.

As to Claim 154, this claim has been amended in the same manner as Claim 111 and in the manner assumed for examination purposes, that is, to recite that the reflection film is selected from among “a dielectric multilayered film and a film lower in refractive index than said light guide.” As such, Applicants submit that the objection to Claim 154 is therefore overcome.

The Official Action also rejected Claims 74, 75, 80, 83, 99, 111, 115, 117, 118, 123, 126, 142 and 154 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,581,380 to Bergman. Further, the Official Action rejects Claims 93 and 136 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the Bergman ‘380 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,994,204 to Doane, et al. and Claim 160 as being obvious over the Bergman ‘160 patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,249,328 to Fukuzawa, et al.

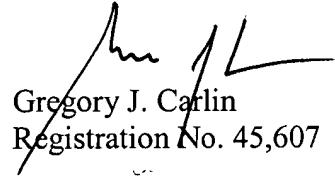
Each of the original independent claims, that is, Claims 74 and 117, has been amended to recite that the optical control layer changes in diffraction efficiency by an electric field applied to the first electrode and the second electrode. As such, independent Claims 74 and 117 no longer recite that the optical control layer changes in either scattering degree or diffraction efficiency. While the Official Action submits that the Bergman '380 patent describes a PDLC that is capable of switching between an at least substantially transparent state and a scattering state and that includes an optical control layer that changes in scattering degree upon application of an electric field, Applicants submit that the Bergman '380 patent does not teach or suggest an optical control layer that changes in diffraction efficiency in response to the application of an electric field by the first and second electrodes, as recited by amended independent Claims 74 and 117. Likewise, neither of the secondary references, i.e., the Doane '204 patent and the Fukuzawa '338 patent, teaches or suggests an optical control layer that changes in diffraction efficiency in response to the application of an electric field, irrespective of whether the secondary references are considered alone or in combination with the Bergman '380 patent.

As now amended, independent Claims 74 and 117 are not taught or suggested by the cited references, taken either individually or in combination, for at least the reason set forth above. Since they include all of the recitations of a respective independent claim, the claims that depend from Claims 74 and 117 are likewise not taught or suggested by the cited references, taken either individually or in combination, for at least the same reason. Thus, Applicants submit that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a) are therefore overcome.

In view of the amendments to the title and the claims and the remarks presented above, Applicants submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance. As such, the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. Should any further issues arise with respect to the application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative in order to expedite the examination process.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,


Gregory J. Carlin
Registration No. 45,607

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP

Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

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Sheila Hayes